

Message Text

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12

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 DPW-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

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R 140153Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8884

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 4556

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, KS, KN

SUBJECT: RED CROSS TALKS

REF: SEOUL 4512

1. AT JULY 13 PRESS CONFERENCE IN SEOUL FOLLOWING RETURN FROM PYONGYANG, CHIEF KNRC DELEGATE YI BOM-SOK EXPRESSED REGRET OVER LACK OF PROGRESS AT RED CROSS TALKS, PESSIMISM ABOUT FUTURE PACE OF TALKS, AND DOUBTS ABOUT NORTH'S MOTIVES.

2. YI SAID RED CROSS TALKS HAD MADE NO PROGRESS BECAUSE NORTH INSISTED ON ABOLITION OF ANTI-COMMUNIST LAW AND NATIONAL SECURITY LAW AS PREREQUISITES FOR UNDERTAKING ANY RED CROSS PROJECTS. HE SAID NORTH USED SAME GROUNDS TO REJECT SOUTH'S PROPOSAL TO ALLOW TRAVEL OF DIVIDED FAMILY MEMBERS AT TIME OF CHUSOK HOLIDAY FOR TRADITIONAL VISIT TO ANCESTRAL GRAVES. YI SAID HE ASKED NORTH KOREAN SIDE TO STUDY THIS PROPOSAL BUT THEY WERE NON-COMMITTAL. HE SAW LITTLE CHANCE THAT IT WOULD BE REALIZED.

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3. IN PRESS CONFERENCE, WHICH WAS NOT RPT NOT BROADCAST LIVE, YI SAID BLUNTLY THAT NORTH'S ATTITUDE IN RED CROSS TALKS FROM THE BEGINNING HAD MADE HIM SUSPECT AN ULTERIOR MOTIVE. HE GAVE EXAMPLES OF BLUNT LANGUAGE HE HAD USED IN REPLYING TO NORTH'S DEMAND FOR ABOLITION OF ROK SECURITY LAWS PRIOR TO ANY FAMILY VISITS. YI SAID HE TOLD THEM QTE WE KNOW THAT IN NORTH KOREA THE FEARSOME INSTRUCTIONS OF THE PARTY GOVERN IN PLACE OF LAW, BUT THE ROK IS RULED BY LAW.... HOW CAN YOU EXPECT US TO PUNISH COMMUNISTS WHO COME TO VISIT RELATIVES? BUT IF THEY COME FOR SOME OTHER PURPOSE, SUCH AS TO DISRUPT OUR PRESENT ORDER OR TO PERPETRATE AND ARMED INSURRECTION, THEN THEY WILL BE DEALT WITH UNDER THE LAW. UNQTE

4. YI SPECULATED THAT DATE OF NEXT RED CROSS TALKS, WHICH WILL BE DECIDED LATER, WILL BE AFTER SEPTEMBER MEETING OF COORDINATING COMMITTEE.

5. YI DID NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTION NORTH KOREAN PROPOSAL FOR 5-POINT JOINT STATEMENT REPORTED BY KCNA FROM PYONGYANG (SEPTEL).

6. COMMENT: ROK SIDE HAS NOT EXPECTED ANY SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS AT THIS SESSION AND THERE APPARENTLY WAS NONE. NORTH KOREAN REJECTION OF ROK PROPOSAL FOR CHUSOK HOLIDAY VISITS TO ANCESTRAL GRAVES WAS EXACTLY WHAT ROK SIDE HAD EXPECTED. WE WILL HAVE MORE DETAILED READ-OUT ON SESSION EARLY NEXT WEEK.
HABIB

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